

# How the Army Contracting Community Helps the National Guard Bureau (NGB) Meet Its Goals

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**M**G Terry L. Scherling, Director, Joint Staff, NGB, responded to questions regarding the National Guard's capabilities, commitments, goals, expanded roles in homeland security and disaster relief, and discusses how the Army's innovative contracting initiatives help the NGB to successfully complete its missions. Scherling brings a wealth of operational experience to the NGB. Prior to this position, she served as the Deputy Director for Antiterrorism and Homeland Defense and the Joint Director for Military Support, Operations Directorate, the Joint Staff. As such, she served as the military adviser to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of Defense for matters related to domestic military operations, and she provided direct support to *Operations Noble Eagle*, *Enduring Freedom*, *Iraqi Freedom* and *Winter Freeze*, and Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

**AL&T:** In the midst of U.S. Army and Air Force transformation initiatives, the NGB has promised governors that every state will possess “10 Essential Capabilities.” Could you please explain what these essential capabilities are and how the Army contracting community is positioned to help you meet these goals contractually.

**Scherling:** When you call out the Guard you call out America. Never before in our Nation’s history is that more true. From our response to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, to our response in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, one thing stands true — America’s National Guard has transformed from a strategic reserve force into a fully operational force multiplier. This transformation makes us ideally suited for missions to protect our homeland from any threat, both at home and abroad.

The National Guard has a commitment to serve our individual states, territories and the District of Columbia in response to local emergencies. We are committed to ensuring that all

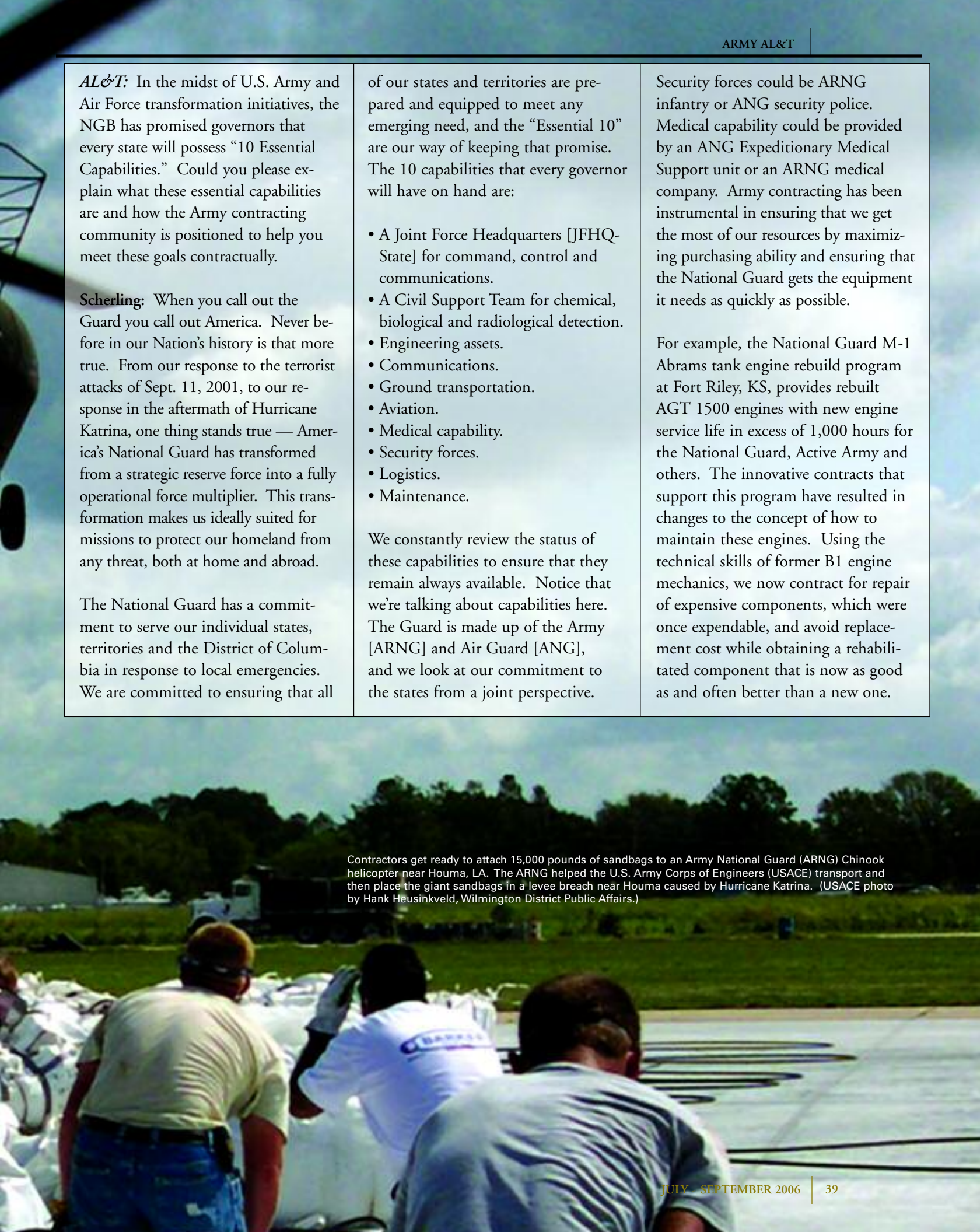
of our states and territories are prepared and equipped to meet any emerging need, and the “Essential 10” are our way of keeping that promise. The 10 capabilities that every governor will have on hand are:

- A Joint Force Headquarters [JFHQ-State] for command, control and communications.
- A Civil Support Team for chemical, biological and radiological detection.
- Engineering assets.
- Communications.
- Ground transportation.
- Aviation.
- Medical capability.
- Security forces.
- Logistics.
- Maintenance.

We constantly review the status of these capabilities to ensure that they remain always available. Notice that we’re talking about capabilities here. The Guard is made up of the Army [ARNG] and Air Guard [ANG], and we look at our commitment to the states from a joint perspective.

Security forces could be ARNG infantry or ANG security police. Medical capability could be provided by an ANG Expeditionary Medical Support unit or an ARNG medical company. Army contracting has been instrumental in ensuring that we get the most of our resources by maximizing purchasing ability and ensuring that the National Guard gets the equipment it needs as quickly as possible.

For example, the National Guard M-1 Abrams tank engine rebuild program at Fort Riley, KS, provides rebuilt AGT 1500 engines with new engine service life in excess of 1,000 hours for the National Guard, Active Army and others. The innovative contracts that support this program have resulted in changes to the concept of how to maintain these engines. Using the technical skills of former B1 engine mechanics, we now contract for repair of expensive components, which were once expendable, and avoid replacement cost while obtaining a rehabilitated component that is now as good as and often better than a new one.



Contractors get ready to attach 15,000 pounds of sandbags to an Army National Guard (ARNG) Chinook helicopter near Houma, LA. The ARNG helped the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) transport and then place the giant sandbags in a levee breach near Houma caused by Hurricane Katrina. (USACE photo by Hank Heusinkveld, Wilmington District Public Affairs.)



Radio communications was one of the NGB's biggest challenges during the disaster relief response to the Gulf Coast region's devastating hurricane season last year. The Guard's goal for this hurricane season is to pre-position communications equipment like the trailer pictured here. This self-contained, mounted incident site emergency communications system features voice, data, video and satellite reach-back capability, allowing NGB personnel to communicate with state and local authorities and fire, military and law enforcement agencies. Four trailers have been ordered off of a direct award contract valued at \$1.8 million. (Photo courtesy of NGB Public Affairs.)

**AL&T:** In a June 2003 *Washington Post* interview, you discussed leveraging units, training and resources to expand and enhance the role of the National Guard in homeland security. Can you tell us how the Guard's role has expanded and give some specific examples of how the Army contracting community is helping you address some of these expanded roles?

**Scherling:** Historically, our units' preparedness has been weighted toward supporting the warfight overseas. More recently, we have leveraged our units and capabilities to even the balance so we can support our national military strategy both at home and abroad. We have established a variety of force packages and capabilities we didn't have five years ago.

For example, the CERFP — the CBRNE [chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-explosive] Enhanced Response Force Package — organizes existing ARNG and ANG medical, engineer and chemical units to augment a Civil Support Team's response to a weapons of mass destruction incident. The CERFP can operate in a contaminated environment, extract

people from the wreckage of a downed building and conduct mass decontamination, triage and treatment in a contaminated environment. We initially stood up 12 of these force packages, strategically dispersed, across the country, at minimal cost to the taxpayer. Congress has been so impressed with the capability that they have told us to stand up five more. CERFP is just one example of how we've leveraged skills for homeland security that were already in the Guard for warfighting.

We've done similar things such as creating a reaction force capability in each state; creating computer emergency response teams to defeat hackers and viruses; and creating critical infrastructure assessment teams. Our contracting personnel have been instrumental in researching and developing innovative ways to quickly get the resources to the need, often at a moment's notice.

The day after 9-11, the National Guard received a mission to deploy

aircraft to various locations around the United States to protect our skies. As a byproduct of the end of the Cold War, many of our alert hangars had been dismantled so we needed to rebuild some quickly. On that Tuesday, the NGB appointed a 2-person contracting team — one ANG and one ARNG contract specialist — to do all of the research, request proposals and review bids. By Friday, a contract was awarded; and by Sunday, construction began. That is just one example of how the Army and Air contracting community is making a difference.

**AL&T:** Following the National Guard's response to the 2005 natural disasters, you said, "The spirit of neighbors helping neighbors has never been stronger." What do you consider the National Guard contracting workforce's

greatest success stories in assisting your organization during the past year's disaster relief operations (DROs) and humanitarian support missions?

**Scherling:** There are numerous examples of individuals going above and beyond the call of duty to get the mission accomplished, in conditions most of us could not ever imagine. When your offices and homes are buried

under 25 feet of water and you are not sure about the safety of family members, it is difficult to imagine one's willingness and ability to focus on the mission. Our contracting specialists in the states affected by the hurricanes last year, working through the U.S. Property and Fiscal Offices, did yeoman's work in procuring goods and services to support relief efforts. That onto itself is not unique. They wrote hundreds of contracts for everything from communications gear to

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U.S. Army Guardsman MAJ Steven Jacob gives directions on clearing debris to SFC Jonnie Noles (right) and SPC Steven Wages, 230th Engineering Battalion, Trenton, TN. These Guardsmen supported humanitarian relief efforts as part of Joint Task Force Katrina. (USAF photo by MSGT James M. Bowman, 1st Combat Camera Squadron.)

portable facilities to food and water and fuel. What is unique is that much of that was done without the things we take for granted today — our computers.

MAJ Milton Griffith of Mississippi and Mark Blanco of Louisiana are two examples of contract specialists who embody the Guard mantra of “Always



A Texas ARNG UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter drops a single 6,000 pound bag of gravel and fine material into the gap in the 17th Street Canal Flood Wall, New Orleans, LA. Texas ARNG helicopters cycled throughout several days to transport giant sandbags to help fill breached levee walls around the flooded city. (USACE photo by Alan J. Dooley, Hurricane Katrina Corps of Engineer Operations.)

Ready, Always There.” They worked night and day those first few days after Hurricane Katrina to get whatever resources were available to the folks who needed it most. That dedication to the mission at hand was repeated around the nation as all 54 states and territories did their part to procure and ship much-needed resources to the affected Gulf Coast region.

**AL&T:** Are National Guard contracting personnel making any advance preparations to support the upcoming hurricane and tornado seasons differently than last year? If so, what flexible or rapid contracting procedures/instruments is your staff prepared to implement to support DROs, humanitarian support and homeland security contingency operations in 2006?

Our response to Katrina last year was dynamic — it was the largest and quickest military response to a natural disaster in history. Since then, we have been purchasing equipment that will allow us to respond with even greater capability.

**Scherling:** For nearly 370 years the National Guard has responded to our Nation’s call and its citizens’ needs.

We are always looking at new and better ways to prepare for the unexpected. The Guard has been, and will always be, the first military responder to any crisis at home.

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national level down to the incident site — particularly when the site you are talking about extends across portions of four states. So we’ve begun rapidly fielding and pre-positioning new communication packages that will connect

us across the entire spectrum down to our units in the field, and also with the civilian emergency responders and other agencies who we are supporting.

Also, every year our contracting specialists do an extensive review of our business practices and our emergency contracting policies. We review lessons learned and identify what and where resources are located in advance of the hurricane and wildfire seasons. We also do it in advance of our winter blizzards or potential flooding. By doing so, our folks are always ready to respond to what needs may arise. Unlike a major war, a catastrophe or crisis is nearly always a local event and each locality has different and unique needs. No one knows those needs better than National Guardsmen who serve the more than 3,300 American communities in which they live.

**AL&T:** Tell us about preparations the National Guard is undertaking to prepare for the event of a national disaster because of a flu pandemic. How will Army contracting professionals help this initiative if, or when, the National Guard is called upon for support?

**Scherling:** The National Guard is conducting extensive planning and training to prepare for a possible flu pandemic. Much of that training revolves around

The 179th Airlift Wing, Ohio ANG, stop at Akron Canton Airport to pick up U.S. Army Soldiers and fly them to New Orleans as part of the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts on Sept. 2, 2005. (USAF photo by TSgt Robert Jones, 179th Airlift Wing.)



educating our forces and their families on how to better prepare themselves before, during and after such a crisis. Additionally, states have developed contingency plans to allow continuity of operations even if we suffer a major reduction in personnel. Contracting professionals play an integral role in identifying how the National Guard may be able to acquire resources from outlets or agencies who may be suffering the same pandemic affects.

**AL&T:** You have stated that for the National Guard to live up to its motto, "America's Minutemen, Always Ready, Always There," equipment and manning resources must be restored. Please describe what is lacking and how the Army contracting community is helping to replace, reset/retrofit or procure new equipment, spare parts, supplies, and logistics and sustainment service contracts so you can better accomplish your mission.

**Scherling:** The Guard has answered every call from our Nation and from our

governors. Since 9-11, the National Guard has been well-equipped for its overseas missions, and has demonstrated its citizen Soldier and citizen Airmen expertise across the full-spectrum of warfighting, peacekeeping and security engagement with our allies.

The response to Katrina, however, revealed serious shortcomings in equipping of Guard units for homeland security and defense. Guard units returned from the overseas warfight with a fraction of the equipment with which they deployed, leaving them far less capable to meet training requirements, or more importantly, fulfilling their operational missions here at home. It is a tribute to our versatility and flexibility that we moved the needed equipment from around the National Guard nationwide to meet the Katrina response mission.

Satellite and tactical communications equipment, medical equipment, utility helicopters, military trucks and engineer equipment are the Army Guard's highest equipment priorities. As we move forward, I can assure you that we have more and better equipment than we did last year. The Army has a comprehensive reset plan that recognizes the ARNG's critical role in homeland defense and support to



SPC James Meidl, ARNG, 890th Engineering Battalion, Columbia, MS, uses his D-7 bulldozer to clear debris from roads in Pass Christian, MS, on Sept. 5, 2005, following Hurricane Katrina. The town's residents benefited from the timely humanitarian response by the Mississippi NG and Army contract specialists who ensured plenty of food and water were delivered to the town once the major roadways were cleared by National Guardsmen, Army engineers and civilian contractors. (USAF photo by MSGT James Bowman, 1st Combat Camera Squadron.)

homeland security operations — and I am confident that the contracting community is working hard to get us there.

**AL&T:** How many National Guard Contracting personnel are working under Joint Contracting Command-Iraq/Afghanistan and how are they assisting with the global war on terrorism?

**Scherling:** While the numbers change almost daily, we have continuously had approximately six contingency contracting officers supporting *Operation Iraqi Freedom* and four contingency contracting officers supporting *Operation Enduring Freedom* for several years now.

We even have the Army's first chief warrant officer-five who was mobilized as a contingency contracting officer. He brings more than 20 years of contracting experience to the warfight.

The Army has a comprehensive reset plan that recognizes the ARNG's critical role in homeland defense and support to homeland security operations — and I am confident that the contracting community is working hard to get us there.

With contracting specialists across 54 states and territories, they experience numerous challenges and unique ways of doing business. That diverse background and in-depth experience of procuring goods and services and construction contracts is proving invaluable in the reconstruction of both Iraq and Afghanistan.

In December [2006], the National Guard will be 370 years old. And yet, we are evergreen — transforming and adjusting to many demands on the new Minutemen. We are not your grandfather's National Guard, your father's or even your sister's. We have transformed the Guard from a strategic reserve to an operational force. We have changed the way we fight, the way we do business and the way we work with others — to provide a relevant National Guard that America needs today and tomorrow.

Today we are a Joint force, the Army and Air National Guard united like never before, in the warfight on the global war on terrorism. We are some 444,000 volunteers — trained, combat experienced and doubly qualified as we bring our civilian skills to the warfight and to the aid of our local communities when disaster strikes.

America insists on a reliable, ready, relevant and accessible National Guard. Today's Guardmember, the 21st-Century Minuteman, must be available to deploy at a moment's notice to defend the Nation, at home or aboard. The Nation expects no less of us, and we are always ready, always there. Because when you call out the Guard, you call out America.

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U.S. Army Guardsman SGT Grady Young (center), 185th Aviation Group, is assisted by Cadet Jonny Pate as they unload Meals, Ready-to-Eat from a UH-60 Black Hawk on Sept. 6, 2005, at the Trent Lott NG Training Complex, Gulfport, MS. (USAF photo by MSGT James M. Bowman, 1st Combat Camera Squadron.)